

Action Inquiry: What can we do to make PLCs more relevant and effective on our campus?

Goal: Our goal is to find ways to make our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) more relevant and effective. We want all members to actively share, participate, and lead PLCs. We also want our campus to have the shared vision that effective PLCs will increase student achievement and allow educators to grow professionally. The goal of our PLCs is to enhance our effectiveness as professionals so that students benefit. **Action Inquiry:** What can we do to make PLCs more relevant and effective on our campus?

Rationale: Rosenholtz (1989) addressed how teachers' workplace factors affected the teaching quality. Rosenholtz noted that teachers who felt supported in their own lifelong learning and classroom practice were more devoted and effective than those who did not receive such affirmation. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) confirmed Rosenholtz's findings, suggesting that when teachers had opportunities for collaborative inquiry they were able to develop and share acuity garnered from their experience. Dana (2009) further emphasizes how PLCs enhance the possibilities for conducting action inquiry and cultivates a community of action inquirers. The "action" in "action inquiry" produces participation, ownership, and results.

In order to implement and evaluate this Action Inquiry, we will use tools and improvement sustainment methods outlined in *Examining what we do to improve our schools: 8 steps to improve our schools* (Harris 2010, pp.94-99).

Dana, N. (2009). *Leading with passion and knowledge: The principal as action researcher*.

Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Gallagher, B. J. & Ventura, S. (2006). *Yes lives in the land of no: A tale of triumph over negativity*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Harris, S., Edmonson, S., and Combs, J. (2010). *Examining what we do to improve our schools: 8 steps to improve our schools*. Eye on Education Press.

Hord, S. (1997). *Professional Learning Communities: What are they and why are they important?: Issues About Change*, Volume 6, Number 1.

McLaughlin, M.W. & Talbert, J.E. (1993). *Contexts that matter for teaching and learning*.

Stanford, California: Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching,
Stanford University.

Rosenholtz, S. (1989). *Teacher's workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York:
Longman.

| Action Steps(s): | Person(s) Responsible: | Timeline: Start/End | Needed Resources | Evaluation |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Analyze the impact of our current PLCs to discover what is effective and ineffective. Allow teachers to engage in self-reflection regarding their contributions to PLCs and ways to make PLCS more relevant and effective to them. | Participants: Faculty & Staff Facilitator: Amy Zbylut & Daniel Salinas | November 30, 2010 – December 3, 2010 | Survey Monkey Computer & Access to the Internet Faculty & Staff (stakeholder participants) | Results from the survey will be used to initiate our action inquiry on “What can we do to make PLCs more relevant and effective on our campus?” |
| Establish routines for collective inquiry that enables team members to develop new skills and capabilities that in turn lead to new experiences and awareness | Amy Zbylut CILT Members PLC Members (Exclude administration, so educators can feel real ownership of the established routines) | December 6, 2010 – January 6, 2011 | Paper Pencils Educator Voices: (In order to share and collaborate on relevant and effective routines and schedules for leading, presenting, & sharing at PLCs) Computer (To type final copy of routines and schedules) Email: (To disseminate final copy of routines and schedules) | Rough Drafts that were created through PLCs will be used to create final copies of routines and schedules. Each PLC Math, Science, Reading, Language Arts, & Social Studies may create their own or decide to use one for all content areas. |

| | | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Create PLC Norms based on what an effective PLC should look like or the mannerism in which it should operate | Content Area PLC Chairperson | December 6, 2010 – January 6, 2011 | Paper Pencils Educator Voices (In order to share and collaborate on relevant and effective PLC Norms to follow during PLCs) Computer (To type final copy of PLC Norms) Email: (To disseminate final copy of PLC Norms) | PLC Norms will be followed and evaluated at future PLCs. |
| Incorporate research based articles, videos, & book studies that allow our campus to implement what was learned Topics Include: *Effective PLCs and their correlation to Student Achievement *Engaging students *Integrating Technology (Provide the skills or job-embedded professional development to allow teachers to implement technology) | Content Area PLC Chairperson Daniel Salinas Loretta Darden Amy Zbylut (Provide the skills or job-embedded professional development to allow teachers to implement technology) | December 2010 – April 2011 | Research Based Articles Internet Paper Books Videos Money (Staff Development-Line Code) | Collaboration and discussion on research based articles, videos, and book studies. Applying what was learned to our classrooms and campus. Discussing the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of what was applied from previous studies/PLCs. |
| Use the Nominal Group Technique to analyze the | Participants: Faculty & Staff Facilitators: | May 2011 | Nominal Group Technique tool Meeting Place for | The results from the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) activity will allow |

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|---|
| impact of our changes to the PLCs to discover what was effective and ineffective. Identify concerns and routines that should be sustained for future PLCs. Address changes that should be in place for future PLCs. | Amy Zbylut & Daniel Salinas | | all staff members Faculty & Staff (stakeholder participants) | us to maintain the positive aspects of our action inquiry on PLCs and to initiate further action inquiry on “What other measures can we take to make PLCs more beneficial to educators and students?” |
|---|-----------------------------|--|---|---|

Format based on Tool 7.1 from *Examining What We Do to Improve Our Schools*

(Harris, Edmonson, and Combs, 2010)